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FRENCH PRO-FASCIST GROUPS

Description

Information is presented on the Milice Francaise, the Parti Populaire Francais and the Rassemblement National Populaire which are the three major fascist movements in France. The history, membership, program, organization, and future plans of these movements are given, as well as facts about organizations of lesser importance.

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Summary

1. There are three major fascist movements in France and a large number of minor ones of varying degrees of importance. Their programs, with the partial exception of two groups, are the same, being closely modeled after German National Socialism (or in a few cases Italian Fascism): they are anti-democratic, anti-capitalist, anti-Semitic, and anti-Allied. Most of these groups are also characterized by the possession of subsidiary formations, of which the most important are the paramilitary units.

2. The chief pro-fascist movements are the Milice Française, the Parti Populaire Français, and the Rassemblement National Populaire. Of these the Milice is now the strongest and most dangerous. The leader of the Milice is also the Vichy Minister of Interior, who controls all French police forces and has close ties with the German military authorities. It is possible that all collaborationist groups prepared to resist the Allies will join the Milice.

3. The pro-fascist movements will contribute to German military strength since it can be expected that the Milice and the paramilitary formations (altogether probably not more than 30,000 men) will be used by the German army for sabotage, street fighting, and spying. Members of French volunteer units of the Wehrmacht, if in France, may also fight with the German forces against the Allies.

4. The pro-fascist movements may present a more serious problem to civil affairs authorities in liberated areas, because their organization fits them for underground activity. They may attempt to capitalize on French discontent with delays in obtaining food or in setting up a new government.

FRENCH PRO-FASCIST GROUPS

I INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this guide is to outline the programs and activities of political groups under the Vichy regime in France which have shown pro-fascist tendencies, and to indicate those which may prove dangerous to the Allied armies in France, or to the civil administration.

A Status of Political Parties and Groups under Vichy

Under the Vichy regime all political parties were declared illegal. As a result most of the pre-1940 parliamentary parties disappeared, with the exception of the Radical-Socialists, Socialists, and Communists, who to a greater or lesser extent have continued to operate underground. Pro-fascist groups -- some of which had existed before 1940 and others of which sprang up after the armistice -- continued their activities despite the theoretical ban against them. In the north zone certain groups, such as the Parti Populaire Français, were openly organized as parties under German protection; in the south zone, to which the powers of the Vichy government were in practice limited until recently, these same groups described themselves as "movements" (e.g. Mouvement Populaire Français Progrès Social Français).

After August 1940 the only organization with official

status was the Légion Française des Combattants, initiated by Marshal Pétain as a substitute for a single party. Intended to provide the chief support of the Vichy government, its recent activity has been limited mostly to social work.

Because there has been no parliament in France since 1940, "party" activity under the Vichy regime has consisted of propaganda for Germany; advocating one or another version of national socialism in France, and maneuvering for top position in the hope of taking over the government. The chief manifestations of this activity have been the publication of newspapers, the holding of party congresses, and the organization and training of paramilitary units.

The membership of the collaborationist groups has never included more than a small minority of the French people; at their peak period not more than 3% to 5% of the population was involved. The number of active militants, which always has been much smaller than the registered membership, is difficult to estimate, as the size of the various groups has tended to fluctuate with the material inducements offered and the relative popularity of the leaders.

B. Major and Minor Groups

The three chief collaborationist groups are the Milice Française, led by Joseph Darnand, the Rassemblement National Populaire, founded by Marcel Déat, and the Parti Populaire Français, headed by Jacques Doriot. Of these, the first two

C. Programs and Techniques of the Pro-fascist Groups

Some of these groups -- for example, the Parti Populaire Francais and the Rassemblement National Populaire -- have opposed the Vichy regime as not sufficiently revolutionary or collaborationist; they are largely financed by and are totally committed to the Germans. Others give a degree of support to Vichy and receive subsidies from it. All the anti-democratic groups, however, (with the exception in part of the Action Francaise and the Progrés Social Francais) have practically identical programs.

These programs call for an authoritarian State, depending on a militia and a secret police. They are anti-Communist, anti-Masonic, and anti-Semitic. All (except the PSF and Action Francaise) have been consistently anti-Allied, advocating French adherence to the Axis and active participation in the war against the Allies. They favor long-term political and economic integration in the New Order. They describe themselves as anti-capitalist, proposing a corporate organization of production. They all have ambitious, if vague, programs for social betterment.

The larger pro-fascist groups have attempted to recruit members through subsidiary formations intended to appeal to various classes of French society. All have youth movements. Some have "cultural" groups. Most have either peasants' or industrial workers' subsidiaries, or both. The groups aimed at winning the support of the peasants and workers have not

been very successful, since their chief activity has been propaganda for the parent party rather than the evolution of any program to solve worker or peasant problems. In organizing most of these subsidiary groups, the ulterior and chief motive was to maintain party organization in case the main body had to go underground.

The youth movements have been modeled to a considerable extent on the Hitler Youth. Their members wear uniforms, and most of them receive training in politics as well as street fighting. They are prepared for future service in the parent bodies' paramilitary units.

D. Paramilitary Formations of the Collaborationist Groups

The most important subsidiaries of the pro-fascist movements, for the Allied armies, are the paramilitary units attached to all the larger and a few of the smaller groups. Early in 1944 the combined strength of these formations may have been as high as 30,000, although it probably was somewhat less.

Some of the "élite" units were organized mainly for bargaining purposes (e.g. the Milice National Populaire attached to Déat's RNP), or for protecting the group's members against attacks by patriots (e.g. the groupes de protection of the Groupe "Collaboration"). These units poorly trained

and equipped, so far as is known, with few arms and little revolutionary conviction, do not constitute a serious problem.

Far more dangerous are the Gardes Francaises of Doriot's Parti Populaire Francais, a tough, tightly organized, well-trained and equipped organization, closely linked to the Germans and understood to be armed by them. Although the Gardes Francaises have probably only about 5,000 members, their total commitment to the German cause and the type of training they have received make active resistance on their part almost inevitable. They have been preparing to resist invasion and are organized to go underground if necessary.

Several attempts to unite the paramilitary formations of the various collaborationist groups into a single militia have been frustrated by the personal ambitions of the rival leaders -- as have been efforts to unite the parent groups into a single party. On the day of the Allied landings in Normandy, the unified militia was still unrealized, but it probably will come about with the progress of the invasion. The most likely eventuality is the absorption of all the paramilitary units into the Milice Francaise, itself originally the paramilitary formation of the Legion des Combattants.

E. Military Formations

The Légion des Volontaires Francais contre le Bolshévisme (Anti-Bolshevik Legion), the French Waffen-SS, and the N.S.K.K. (National Socialist armed motor transport unit) are

French military formations trained for service with the German Army on the eastern front. Recruits wear German uniforms except while training or on leave in France, when they are supposed to wear French uniforms. At the end of 1943, the combined strength of the French units in the German army was perhaps 10,000, of whom probably three-quarters were outside of France. Largely recruited from the membership of the collaborationist groups, both the LVF and the French Waffen-SS have particularly close ties with the Milice, and although intended primarily for use in Russia, they may be used inside France.

In addition to the French formations serving with the German army, the German authorities have permitted the existence of one French regiment, theoretically the nucleus of a new French army to replace the Armistice army which was dissolved in November 1942. Intended to number some 2,700 men, the "First Regiment of France" was reported to have recruited only about 1,000 volunteers by the spring of 1944. It is thus a purely token force. The "First Regiment" is commanded by a Colonel Berlon, who is noted for strong pro-German sympathies, and it was placed directly under the control of Laval. A few days after the invasion of Normandy, part of the "First Regiment" was reported to have gone over to the Resistance.

F. Potential Dangers of the Pro-fascist Groups

Opposition from the pro-fascist groups may be anticipated on the military and the ideological level.

In the military field, the Milice Française and at least some of the paramilitary formations will reinforce German defensive operations, probably with guerrilla tactics and street fighting, in which they have been especially trained. Presumably many of their members will not wear uniforms. They also will be used as secret agents and will assist in attempts to wipe out the Resistance movement before the latter can give substantial aid to the Allies.

A greater danger during both liberation and post-liberation periods is the possibility that after the withdrawal of the German forces, the remnants of these groups may go underground. Both the Milice and the Parti Populaire Français are organized on a cellular basis which would make such a step feasible. Both have been training seasoned, but previously unknown, militants to take over in case of a German defeat.

The possibility must be kept in mind that a variety of groups and individuals may come forward claiming to represent local or national opinion. Some of these groups or individuals may be connected, or may have been connected, with anti-democratic movements.

The post-invasion period will be difficult for France. For four years the country has undergone extreme political, economic, and moral distress. Inevitably the French will expect ample supplies of food and clothing and a degree of political stability to result immediately from liberation. Almost

inevitably they will be disappointed at the slowness with which supplies appear, at the delays in establishing a smoothly-running government of their own choice. The chief danger presented by the anti-democratic groups may be their ability to capitalize on disillusionments felt by the French population-at-large. Prepared to continue functioning anonymously after the withdrawal of the German forces, these groups, for instance may attempt to spread rumors concerning Allied intentions toward France or her colonies, to accentuate anti-Allied feeling, and thus greatly complicate the task of the Allied authorities.

II. THE MILICE FRANÇAISE

Although the political theory of Fascism and National Socialism usually dictates the creation of a single party, Germany has not been anxious to permit the creation of a single party within occupied France. Therefore, French politics under the Nazis have been complicated by the constant struggle of rival groups to attain a dominant position in German favor. The group which recently has come out on top is the French Militia, whose chief, Joseph Darnand, was made a member of the Vichy cabinet last December and was raised to ministerial rank a few days after the invasion of Normandy. As Minister of Interior he is in control of all Vichy security forces, and at the end of June 1944 was probably the most powerful Vichy-Frenchman.

A. History

The Milice Francaise, in its present form, is supposed --

like the National Guard in the United States -- to protect the nation from its internal enemies and to prevent disorder in times of crisis. Its chief activity is the suppression of the Resistance groups.

Originally the Milice was the paramilitary formation of the Légion des Combattants (q.v.). It was founded in January 1942 by Joseph Darnand, then departmental head of the Légion for Alpes-Maritimes, a veteran of both wars and a former Cagoulard, who had served a prison term for embezzlement and illegal arms traffic with Italy. The Service d'Ordre Légionnaire, or SOL, as the organization was first called, drew heavily on former members of the Cagoule, the extremist elements of the former Croix de Feu, and other pro-fascist groups. It spread rapidly from Alpes-Maritimes to other departments and soon covered the south zone with a network of informers and professional criminals who have been credited with the murder of a number of noted intellectuals (including recently the Radical Socialist leader and publisher Maurice Sarraut) as well as of rank-and-file members of the Resistance.

In January 1943 the SOL, from the beginning far more collaborationist than the Légion as a whole and supporting Laval rather than Pétain, split from the parent body and, without being specifically named, was made the nucleus of a new French Militia. The Milice was placed under the supreme

command of Laval as head of the Government and under the supervision of the Ministry of the Interior with Darnand as Secretary General. It was from the start considered an auxiliary police force, and its members seem to have assumed the right to wear arms and to stop individual citizens for identity inspections.

B. Membership

There are no reliable figures on the strength of the Milice. The best estimates indicate that there are not more than 5,000 fully armed and trained shock troops (permanent Francs-Gardes). In addition, there were in February 1944 some 15,000 partly armed and trained reserves. Over-age sympathizers, a women's subsidiary (Miliciennes), and a youth movement (Avant-Garde Milicienne) may raise the total to about 25,000.

All members of the Milice must be French by birth neither Jewish nor members of any secret (i.e. Masonic) society, and must be approved by the departmental chief. All are subject to a three-month probationary period during which they undergo compulsory political training, specializing in "corporative, social, intellectual, or moral" subjects, or in propaganda.

C. Program

The political program of the Milice differs in no way from that of other fascist groups, except in being even less specific than most. Based theoretically on the twenty-one points of Pétain's National Revolution, it consists essentially of violent antagonism to Jews, Freemasons, Communists, and

resistant Frenchmen in general.

D. Organization

The essential body of the Milice is the Franc-Garde, which is subdivided into two forces: (1) the permanent Francs-Gardes; (2) the reserve Francs-Gardes.

1. The permanent Francs-Gardes. The permanent Francs-Gardes have no other occupation, are paid 3,500 to 4,500 francs a month, live in barracks, and undergo intensive military and political training. They wear a uniform consisting of Basque beret, beige shirt with black tie, and dark blue trousers; their insignia is the Greek letter gamma. Little is known of their equipment, which has been supplied in large part by the Germans. Some months ago it was reported that each group of one hundred men had a machine gun, a submachine gun, 30 rifles, two automatic rifles, and a number of revolvers, as well as trucks and motorcycles. It is probable they are more fully equipped now.

The permanent Francs-Gardes are young, tough, and thoroughly indoctrinated with fascist beliefs. Many of them are said to have been recruited from the ranks of professional criminals. Each member of the group has been trained at an instruction camp in specifically military and police tactics, such as unarmed combat and street fighting, and he has received a fortnight's political and physical training at the École des Cadres at Uriage. After this training, the Franc-Garde units engage regularly in

strenuous maneuvers planned to eliminate any weaknesses in their organization. They have been used for such duties as watching suspects, checking identity papers with or without police authorization, acting as Laval's bodyguard, and selling the Milice paper Combats.

2. The Reserve Francs-Gardes. The reserve Francs-Gardes continue in their regular occupations, meet once a week for training, and are utilized only on special summons, presumably near home. Indications are that the reserves have been trained to operate in civilian clothes and apparently are prepared to go underground. Within a few days after the landings in Normandy, they were being mobilized.

3. Departmental organization. Both permanent and reserve Francs-Gardes are organized within the departments on a cellular basis. The fundamental unit is the main, consisting of four men and a chef de main. The larger units are the dizaine (two mains under a chef de dizaine); the trentaine (three dizaines under a chef de trentaine; the centaine (three trentaines under a chef de centaine); and the cohorte (three centaines under a chef, with a staff of not more than twenty-five). Apparently the trentaine is the most important of these units for purposes of actual operations. It is probable, however, that in many departments this organization exists only on paper.

E Present standing and Future Plans of the Milice

For some months after the formation of the Milice, Laval

controlled its finance closely and insisted on approving every important appointment or decision made by Darnand. During this period the Miliciens seem to have had few arms. In the fall of 1943 Darnand made an agreement with the German authorities under which the Milice was to provide 400 or more "volunteers" for a new French unit of the Waffen-SS, to fight on the Russian front. Darnand himself, with fourteen superior officers of the Milice, joined the French Waffen-SS, of which Darnand is reported to be the chief. In return, the Germans are understood to have agreed to supply the Milice with arms. They also exerted pressure on the Vichy government to admit Darnand and one of his chief lieutenants (Philippe Henriot, assassinated in June 1944) to the cabinet.

Since Darnand's appointment as Vichy Secretary General for the Maintenance of Order in December 1943, the activities of the Milice have greatly expanded. The Milice became the official partner of the police in tracing down members of the Resistance. During one week in February 1944 it was said to have made 4,000 arrests. In January it was permitted to extend its operations to the north zone, where it had some success in recruiting in spite of reported interference by rival paramilitary formations.

Up to the time of the invasion, the repeated attempts to merge the various armed fascist groups had failed, not only because of the jealousy of their leaders, but also because the Germans distrusted any single strong French armed group. With the progress of the Allied forces, it is probable that the Milice

will absorb the armed units of the PPF, RNP, and Francisme. There are already several local precedents for joint operation. Several months ago, the Milice at Nimes was cooperating with the local Francistes, PPF, and Groupe "Collaboration" members in the formation of five-man self-defence units which probably were intended to go underground in case of invasion. At Lyon the PPF, LVF (anti-Bolshevik Legion), and Milice operated a joint intelligence service which worked with the Germans; a few months ago the three groups assisted in patrolling the Pyrenees frontier. The predecessor of the Milice, the SOL, joined forces with the PPF in the Tunisian campaign.

The strength of the Milice lies in its official position in the Vichy government, the backing of the German authorities, and the ruthlessness of both leaders and rank-and-file. Its weakness is its unpopularity with the regular police forces, as well as with the people at large. The fierce hatred of the Resistance movement for the Milice has resulted in an increasingly high mortality rate among its members. Prior to the invasion, the morale of the Milice was said to be poor and the number of resignations very large. The mobile units sent into Haute-Savoie in the spring of 1944 to clean up the "maquis" seem to have been so ineffective that regular Wehrmacht units had to replace them. The size of the Milice, therefore, now may be smaller than the 20,000 permanent and reserve Francs-Gardes claimed for it.

Immediately after the invasion of Normandy the Milice--

both permanent Francs-Gardes and reserves-- was mobilized to put down armed uprisings. According to recent and well-founded reports, the Milice will be the only French force allowed by the Germans in the combat zone. Miliciens will be used to uncover and denounce Allied and patriot agents, as the Germans do not trust the regular French police forces enough to admit them to the combat areas.

As has been pointed out in this guide, a greater danger than immediate and overt resistance on the part of the Milice is the possibility that a so thoroughly indoctrinated and trained group, in case of post-liberation discontent and disillusionment, may continue to make political trouble.

III. PARTI POPULAIRE FRANÇAIS

Until the summer of 1943, the PPF was by far the most successful and most dangerous of the French anti-democratic movements. It alone came within measurable distance of establishing itself as a National Socialist government of France. At the peak of its strength the party claimed 1,000,000 members, but by the end of 1943 the membership probably could be counted in the tens of thousands. The reasons for its marked decrease in membership may be attributable in part to the news of Allied victories, to the increasing unpopularity of PPF members with the French public at large, and to the increasing number of attacks on them by Resistance militants.

Moreover the fact that certain influential German authorities decided to support Joseph Darnand, chief of the Milice, in line with the policy of preventing the formation of any single strong party, probably contributed to the loss of membership by the PPF. Despite its reduced membership, the effective organization of the PPF, its tough para-military formation, and its plans for continued existence as a secret society present a real danger -- both to the liberating forces and to any future French democratic regime.

A. History

1. Before 1940. The PPF differs from the average collaborationist party in that it existed before the 1940 armistice. It was founded in 1936 by Jacques Doriot, former Communist, ex-deputy, and mayor of the Paris industrial suburb of Saint-Denis, who remains its leader. In the years before 1940 the party attracted a motley assortment of the discontented: other ex-Communists, former members of the fascist leagues which were dissolved in 1936, youthful fascist intellectuals, petty thugs.

The purpose of the PPF before the war was to save France from Communism by establishing a fascist regime. From the time of Munich it favored appeasement, and after the collapse of France was able to collaborate immediately. In return, the party has been largely subsidized by Germany since 1940.

2. Since 1940. Although other French fascist groups sprang up shortly after the Armistice, the PPF rapidly became the largest and most successful. The party owed its success, in a considerable degree, to the vigor of its propaganda -- disseminated through its papers, the daily Cri du Peuple and the weekly Emancipation Nationale, and through impressive meetings. It won prestige also through the evident willingness of the German authorities to work with PPF members, and through its ability to attack Laval. It was known that the PPF was the only such group not to be subsidized by Vichy, because Laval recognized Doriot as his only serious opponent.

The PPF was able to infiltrate the paramilitary formations of rival parties successfully, including for a time the SOL (predecessor of the Milice). It was able to dominate the Légion des Volontaires Français, organized originally by a committee of representatives of four collaborationist groups. The party was strong enough to prevent the union of the French fascist parties or of their paramilitary units as recently as the summer of 1943, because Doriot, unwilling to join any unified movement which he could not control, still hoped to make the PPF itself the sole party. In Tunisia, in November 1942, local PPF members with some SOL assistance seized the administrative centers in Tunis, temporarily assuring the city's control by pro-Axis Frenchmen, and sent supporters to

fight beside the Germans in the Tunisian campaign.

The party never succeeded to power, however, and began to decline in the summer of 1943. Doriot has spent most of his time since 1942 at the eastern front as a lieutenant in the L.V.F. Early in 1944 he announced his withdrawal from political activity, leaving the management of the PPF to the Bureau Politique. The current position of the party is not clear, but it still represents a potential danger to the liberating forces.

B. Membership

A considerable part of the PPF membership was recruited from the gangsters and unemployables. The party also has attracted ex-radicals (such as Paul Marion) and has drawn on certain industrial and financial circles (typical of whom are Benoist-Mechin, and Leroy-Ladurie).

C. Program

Like other collaborationist movements, the PPF advocates adherence to the anti-Comintern pact, a full military alliance with Germany, declaration of war on the Allies, and the reconquest of the French Empire. It opposes Communism and Freemasonry and is violently anti-Semitic. Its economic and social program closely resembles that of the National Socialist Party of Germany, advocating the abolition of capitalism and the substitution of some sort of corporate collectivism. Abolition of unemployment, readjustment of wages according to need, slum clearance, maternity and child welfare services are all promised.

D. Organization.

The organization of the PPF is important because it has been

set up to survive as an underground movement if the party should be legally dissolved. Also it has served as a model for the organization of other anti-democratic groups, notably the Milice. Since 1940 the PPF has been organized on strictly authoritarian lines and reflects the influence of Doriot's Communist experience. Close control of party activities is exercised by Doriot and an executive committee known as the Bureau Politique. Since Doriot's absence at the Russian front, eight members of the Bureau have governed the party through a directorate.

The territorial administration operates through regions (corresponding in the main to the Vichy administrative regions), departmental federations, and sections, headed by a responsible official (responsable) assisted by a permanent committee. Within the sections active, militant members are grouped in cells, called mains, of four men led by a fifth. Six mains form a trentaine, commanded by a chef de trentaine; Three trentaines make up a centaine under a chef de centaine. There can be any number of centaines in a section, all under the command of a chef de section who is in turn subordinate to the federation secretary.

The PPF is well distributed throughout both zones. In the south zone, because of the enforcement of the Vichy ban on political parties, it appears as the Mouvement Populaire Français. The strongholds of the party are Paris and Marseille. In Marseille it controls a gang of thugs led by Simon Sabiani, one of the ranking members of the Bureau Politique, notorious in France for his extensive underworld activities.

1. Subsidiaries. The PPF has a number of subsidiaries, ostensibly affiliated only very loosely to the parent body. These subsidiaries include such apparently innocuous groups as the Cercles Populaires Français, designed to appeal to middle-aged "bourgeois" circles by emphasizing Franco-German "cultural" relations; the Amis de l'Emancipation Nationale, an organization designed to increase the circulation of the weekly paper in the south zone where it has many local offices; and the Groupe Paysan, an unsuccessful organization seeking to popularize PPF political doctrine among the small farmers. The membership of these subsidiaries is not known.

More frankly militant than these groups is the PPF's youth movement, Jeunesse Populaire Française, which has been closely copied from the Hitler Youth. The JPF has claimed as many as 10,000 members, but this figure probably is exaggerated.

2. Paramilitary formations. The PPF has two paramilitary bodies, the Service d' Ordre (not to be confused with the Service d'Ordre Légionnaire, predecessor of the Milice), formed toward the end of 1941, and the Gardes Françaises, announced in July 1943.

a. Service d'Ordre. The official function of the Service d'Ordre was to keep order at party meetings, to protect party officers, property, and members distributing tracts, and to spy on local Gaullists and Communists. The Service de Renseignements of the S.O. is known to have worked closely with the German secret police.

b. Gardes Françaises. The Service d'Ordre seems to have been eclipsed and possibly absorbed by the more recent Gardes Françaises which are supposed to form a Corps d'Élite. Theoretically the Gardes Françaises are made up of all fit PPF members between the ages of eighteen and fifty. Although former members of the Jeunesse Populaire Française are required to join, it has been reported that Doriot was disappointed with the slow rate of recruiting.

The organization of the Gardes is based, like that of the PPF itself, on five-man cells, or groupes, presumably to facilitate underground activity in the event of invasion. Larger units are : sections (three groupes), pelotons (three sections), compagnies (three pelotons), and bataillons (three compagnies). There is a crack formation, the Garde Doriot, within the Gardes Françaises.

From the start the Gardes Françaises have been a more specifically military formation than the Service d'Ordre. They have been trained in street fighting and sabotage in preparation for an Allied invasion. They are reported to have received revolvers, grenades, and sub-machine guns from the Germans. Their uniforms are navy-blue with a PPF brassard on the left arm, but it is possible they will not wear uniforms when actually fighting.

As the toughest part of a tough outfit, the Gardes Françaises are a threat not to be underestimated. They are said to number two thousand in the Paris area alone, with three thousand

in the rest of France, centering in Nice, Marseille, Bordeaux, and Rennes. Their links with Germany are extremely close. Although there has been no information about their activities since the start of the invasion, and although Doriot's current standing with the Germans is not clear, the PPF is so completely committed to collaboration that active resistance on the part of the Gardes seems inevitable.

E. Future Plans of the PPF.

On 8 June the PPF directorate and Bureau Politique issued a manifesto proclaiming the full mobilization of the party "in defense of Europe's civilization" against "Anglo-American barbarity." The secretaries of the departmental federations were ordered to place themselves and their organizations at the disposal of "the loyal forces of the French state (i.e. Vichy) and of security organizations of the European armies for maintenance of order in the interior." The implication here is that PPF members expect to be used especially as agents of the German secret police, as they have been to a considerable extent in the past. "In this task," the manifesto concluded, PPF members "should show the largest possible spirit of collaboration with all revolutionary and collaborationist elements, organized or otherwise." On 13 June it was reported that the party directorate had agreed with Darnand to authorize PPF members to join the Milice.

According to a report of November 1943, plans of the PPF leaders for the post-invasion period involve the resignation of the party directorate in favor of a so-called "shadow cabinet,"

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composed of young but seasoned militants who are at p[illegible] completely inconspicuous. Since the members of the shadow cabinet would be unknown, suppression would be difficult. Members of the party would stay underground as long as possible, fleeing to Spain if their arrest was imminent.

In German plans, the post-liberation role of the PPF is reported to be the taking over of espionage work in France from the Abwehr, so that a secret service for future use may be left behind.

IV. RASSEMBLEMENT NATIONAL POPULAIRE

A. History

The RNP was founded in Paris in February 1941 by Marcel Déat, former Socialist deputy and journalist long known as an appeaser and pro-German. The group was intended as a counter-move against Marshal Pétain's short-lived Rassemblement National and as a protest against the dismissal of Laval in December 1940. In its early period the RNP agitated chiefly for the return of Laval and for the resumption of whole-hearted collaboration with Germany. It always has been limited to the north zone.

B. Membership

In addition to Déat, the RNP's founders-- some of whom since have broken away or been expelled--included a number of ex-Socialists and Rightist politicians who had favored an appeasement policy toward Germany. Among them were such men as Adrien Marquet, former Minister of Interior and mayor of Bordeaux;

Georges Rivollet, Minister of Pensions in the Doumergue and Flandin ministries; Jean Luchaire, publisher of the strongly collaborationist Paris daily Les Nouveaux Temps; the late Eugène Deloncle, one of the leaders of the Cagoulards (the "hooded men" of the Comité Secret d'Action Revolutionnaire, whose plots against the French Government were uncovered in 1937), and a group of former deputies.

The RNP had considerable success at first in recruiting members through subsidiary formations designed to interest special sections of the community, such as industrial workers and small farmers. Déat's group is, however, much less genuinely revolutionary than the other major Paris party, Doriot's Parti Populaire Français, or the Milice Française, and accordingly has had much less appeal. Since the fall of 1943 the RNP has been losing members, the extremists going usually to the PPF and the moderates trying to achieve obscurity before the day of liberation. The organization's total present membership is not known, but recent figures for specific departments show local sections to have less than a twentieth of the membership of the PPF.

3. RNP Program.

The RNP differs from other collaborationist groups mainly in its less extreme techniques and in the higher intellectual caliber of its leaders. Basically its program is much the same as that of other anti-democratic movements in that it is anti-Masonic, anti-Semitic (though less violent than, for instance,

the PPF), and anti-capitalist. Scorning any type of democracy, it advocates a totalitarian France within a planned Europe under German guidance, and has adopted a more detailed and advanced program of internal reforms, along National Socialist lines, than other French anti-democratic groups.

D. Future Plans of the RNP.

From the point of view of the Allies, the RNP can be considered relatively insignificant as a group. It never has been organized for underground activity during or after hostilities and its paramilitary formations, the Légion Nationale Populaire and the younger Milice Nationale Populaire, seem never to have been serious fighting units. Before the invasion, the RNP had, however, been exploring the possibility of uniting with Darnand's Milice Française. Presumably any members left with strong pro-German convictions will obey Déat's orders, issued a few days after the landings in Normandy, to join the Milice.

Far more important than the RNP as a whole is its founder, who owes his post as Vichy Minister of Labor to strong German pressure, and who often has been mentioned as a German choice for Laval's successor. Marcel Déat is a man of intelligence and of great political flexibility. On the one hand, in his paper L'Oeuvre (taken over from the moderately liberal Radical-Socialists), Déat has sharply criticized Vichy for its failure to carry through a National Socialist revolution in France, and he has tried repeatedly to form a single party. On the other hand last September

he advocated the calling of the National Assembly, i.e. the combined parliamentary bodies of the Third Republic, stressing the point that it had never been dissolved. His object in making this proposal apparently so at odds with his totalitarian beliefs, was presumably to strengthen the Vichy regime against an uprising of Allied sympathizers at the time of the Allied invasion, and at the same time to suggest to the Allies that the government in power had a genuinely legal basis. It was suggested by some observers that Déat might be planning a last-minute conversion to democracy in an effort to redeem himself in Allied eyes. This outcome is, however, no longer probable. Déat seems too fully committed to the German cause to turn back. In March 1944 he was made Secretary of State for Labor in the Vichy cabinet by the Germans, who up to that time were reported to be subsidizing him at the rate of 1,000,000 francs a month. A few days after the initial Allied landings he was raised to ministerial rank. His subsequent announcement that he had joined Darnand's Milice (symbolically rather than actively) and that he was ordering his followers to do the same, in order to resist the Allies, would indicate a decision to stay openly with National Socialism to the end.

V. FRANCISME

A. History

The Franciste movement was founded in 1933 by Marcel Bucard as a pressure-group for disgruntled ex-service men and was dissolved in 1936 along with the other Fascist leagues. It maintained an underground existence, however, until after the 1940 armistice.

Bucard, whose actual military record in both wars appears to have been creditable, served in the present conflict until captured. Early in 1941 he was returned to France from internment and, with the full permission and probably the financial support of both the German authorities and the Vichy regime, revived his party, which developed into one of the three major anti-democratic movements of the north zone.

Francisme reached the peak of its influence in the summer of 1943 when it conducted a party congress in Paris which mustered some 3,000 uniformed members. The movement began to lose prestige with the failure of Bucard's effort (made together with Déat) to form a united militia by joining Darnand's Milice française in the south zone with the paramilitary formations of the north zone parties (PPF, RNP, and Francisme, chiefly). Bucard took the lead in proposing this union and pledged himself, at the party conference, to achieve it. The effort failed with Doriot's refusal to cooperate.

B. Membership

The Franciste organization extends throughout both the north and the south zone. In the south zone, however, it operates under cover of the Comités de Diffusion du Franciste (committees for the distribution of Le Franciste -- the party's weekly organ).

Membership of Francisme has never been large. Figures for 1942 placed the maximum membership in the north zone at 5,000. At its peak in July 1943 the movement claimed 10,000.

While its membership has been small in comparison to the PPF or the RNP, and its influence in France as a whole very slight, the influence of Francisme in the realm of collaborationist politics has been out of proportion to its size. This is due chiefly to the fact that the membership is active and well-disciplined. It is due also to the ability, skill, and personal influence of Bucard himself.

C. Organization

The elaborate party organization, which involves a central council (Conseil Central de l'Action Politique) in Paris and local groups controlled through regional and departmental delegates, apparently is thinly distributed and in the south zone is little more than a skeleton.

In addition to its regular membership, Francisme, like other fascist movements, has an auxiliary for young people and a paramilitary formation.

1. Youth Movement. Its youth group, the Jeunesse Franciste, has been given official recognition by the Vichy Youth

Secretariat, and with the Cadets Francistes (for younger boys) claims a thousand or more members. There is also a Jeunesse Feminine for girls.

2. Légion Franciste. Francisme's paramilitary formation, the Légion Franciste, was formed later than most such militant wings, probably for bargaining purposes in the negotiations over a single collaborationist militia. Until the time of the Légion's establishment in the spring of 1943, the Francistes had only a bodyguard, to protect Bucard, the Corps Franc, which has been absorbed by the Légion Franciste. The Légion is organized like other similar bodies, into mains, équipes (three mains), blocs (three équipes), and cohortes (three blocs). Its strength is unknown, but it probably is not large. There is evidence the Légion has received some arms from the Germans and that it has been fairly well trained. Its members are reported to have been used on occasion to fight the maquis.

D. Future of Francisme

The movement has no chance of surviving as a political force in liberated France. It already has been seriously weakened both by the failure of its leader's political maneuvers and by the fall of Mussolini, since Francisme drew more on Italian fascism than on German National Socialism and was heavily subsidized by Mussolini's government.

In view of its present weakness, and with the invasion, it may be forced into affiliation either with the PPF or with Darnand's Milice. After liberation is completed, individual Francistes may be expected to attempt to escape retaliation by going into hiding. The chief danger they present, like members of other collaborationist groups, is that they may be used as German agents.

VI. MINOR NORTH ZONE PARTIES

A. Mouvement Social Revolutionnaire

The MSR has now mainly an historical significance. It was founded as a pro-German group shortly after the Armistice by the late Eugène Deloncle, who had been a leading member of the Cagoulards. The movement's chief contribution was its part in founding the Rassemblement National Populaire with which it was merged for eight months in 1941. In October 1941 the MSR resumed an independent existence for either personal or doctrinal reasons. After part of the MSR joined Doriot's PPF en bloc, Deloncle resigned in the spring of 1943. His death was announced in January 1944.

Since the end of 1943 there has been no evidence of MSR activity. The hypothesis has been suggested, however, that the MSR is merely shamming death and that supporters who did not join one of the more successful collaborationist groups will hope to prove that they have been essentially anti-German. In this case, they might attempt to revive their movement. As late as December 1943 the MSR's Secretary

General stated that the MSR, in opposing "parliamentary democracy and synarchistic capitalism, "actually was working to bring about a real revolution in the distant future, "a revolution of the spirit."

B. The Ligue Française

Originally formed in the autumn of 1940, and several times renamed, the Ligue Française reached the peak of its influence in November 1942 and since has declined sharply, its members joining other and more successful collaborationist groups. It never extended beyond the north zone. Its chief significance, perhaps, is that its founder, Pierre Costantini -- a former journalist with strongly anti-British views -- was also one of the founders of the Légion des Volontaires Français.: the Ligue's main activity has been concerned with recruiting French volunteers for the Russian front. The Ligue's organ, L'Appel, consistently has advocated war with England and the United States.

C. Groupe "Collaboration"

The Groupe "Collaboration" is a more important enterprise from the intellectual point of view. It may be more dangerous from the point of view of post-war French democracy. Founded by Alphonse de Châteaubriant, a highly literate journalist and writer, to promote cultural relations between France and Germany, it has appealed to the same people who formed the Comité France - Allemagne before the war.

(This group was composed of extremely respectable upper bourgeois, and was given impetus by Otto Abetz.) The new movement, patronized by Vichy's ambassador to Germany, Fernand de Brinon, is an organization of the middle-aged, the cautious, and the wealthy. Its chief activity has been the organization of pro-German lectures which expound the necessity for collaboration. Since it is not classified as a political party, it has been organized in both zones. Its success with the middle classes may be explained in that it offers a polite method of collaboration, involving no street fights or militant demonstrations. Its official membership in the middle of 1943 was about 200,000, of whom some 45,000 were in the south zone.

The Groupe "Collaboration" has a militant youth movement, the Jeunes d'Europe Nouvelle, which has shown a tendency to fraternize with Bucard's Légion Franciste. During 1943 it was found necessary to develop groupes de protection to guard members against attacks by the Resistance. These groupes number no more than four hundred men and seem to be confined to the south zone. Some of them apparently are armed. By themselves they constitute no serious danger, but there is some evidence to suggest that they might join with the PPF or the Milice at the time of invasion.

D. Other Small North Zone Groups

Paris has been the center for several small totalitarian groups which are largely or entirely unimportant.

1. National Collectivisme, headed by Pierre Clémenti,

began ambitiously, developing a paramilitary formation (Gardes Françaises, now so thoroughly defunct that Doriot was able to take over the name for the PPF's shock troops). Owing to lack of funds and prestige, the group now has little importance.

2. Other Anti-Democratic Groups in Paris include Le Parti National Socialiste Français, La Croisade Française, Le Front Franc, Les Energies Françaises, and the Feu movement. The average size of these parties is under two hundred members and their meetings are infrequent. Since none of them has been armed officially, and since some of them are more active supporters of Fascism as practiced in Italy and Spain than of National Socialism, they may be expected to have little more than nuisance value during invasion. No single party among them has had any popular appeal, as their membership figures testify.

3. German-sponsored Separatist Movements have not been successful. The Parti National Breton, founded before the war and provided with money and support by the Germans, recently changed its policy without altering its essentially totalitarian nature. Turning from the Germans it now stresses its allegiance to the Marshal and its basic concern with French welfare. According to some reports, the leaders of the party hope by this device to make themselves acceptable to Allied leaders, and to be able to bridge the invasion

period. Factors opposing this aim include the money and supplies which the party has received from the Germans, the calibre of the men who lead the party, the strictly Fascist ideology with which the movement is identified, and the inappropriateness of a campaign ostensibly for regional autonomy at a time of national crisis. Furthermore, the membership of the party in all of Brittany does not exceed five hundred, only a portion of whom are militants.

VII. SOUTH ZONE ANTI-DEMOCRATIC MOVEMENTS

A. The Légion Française des Combattants et Volontaires de la Révolution Nationale

The Légion des Combattants represents Pétain's attempt to create a single party to act as the main prop of the "National Revolution" and also to prevent the formation of a single party by Doriot or Déat. Originally, its membership was to consist of those servicemen who had distinguished themselves in the field in both wars but it was later extended to include all sympathizers with the aims of the National Revolution. With the creation of the Légion in August 1940, all political parties were declared illegal, as were all servicemen's organizations not solely concerned with welfare work. The Légion was the sole organization given official status; it was supposed to be above partisan politics and to have the promotion of the National Revolution as its task.

At its peak the Légion numbered around one million members and was an important entity in French life in the south zone. Membership was an insurance of employment for the worker, of business for the small merchant, of a job for the civil servant, of advantages for the industrialist and big business man. It appealed particularly to the conservative middle class of moderate means and to people who believed that the paternalistic form of government advocated by Pétain was the only hope for France.

Since its reorganization by Laval in 1942, the political role of the Légion has been greatly reduced. During 1942 and 1943 membership shrank considerably with the increasing discrediting of the Vichy regime. With the formation of the Milice, the Légion lost its militant wing (the SOL), whose violent program and direct action methods in any case were out of harmony with those of the parent body. The Légion's elaborate regional organization, its numerous minor officials, and its youth, peasant, and worker subsidiaries have passed into a state of comparative inactivity. It is now mostly limited to welfare work, carried on mainly by women. Even this program is not popular with the people at large.

It is almost certain that the Légion will constitute no problem in Allied operations. There is evidence that many of its residual members are not in sympathy with collaboration or even any longer with the Vichy regime. They

are likely to be passive when the liberating forces appear.

B. The Progrès Social Français and the Action Française

These two parties are the only survivors of the Third Republic openly active in the south zone under the Vichy regime.

1. PSF. Colonel François de la Rocque's Parti Social Français, successor to the Croix de Feu--the servicemen's pro-fascist league of the early and middle thirties--was organized as "Progrès Social Francais" (PSF) after having been dissolved as a para-military league. On the whole it has supported the Vichy regime, which largely adopted its program of an authoritarian paternalistic, corporate state, and even took over its slogan "Famille, Travail, Patrie." Some of its supporters hold posts in the Vichy administration. The PSF, however, has not been in agreement with Laval's policy of whole-hearted collaboration with Germany, and La Rocque who has been interned since March 1943, has been accused of pro-Allied sympathies. There is little foundation for this "accusation."

In the absence of its chief, and with the arrest of two of his lieutenants, the PSF has managed to retain the skeleton of an effective party organization in both zones. It has limited its activity to extensive welfare work, which is said to be subsidized by a number of French industrialists. Its present membership is not known.

It seems safe to say that the PSF will not present any problem at the time of the invasion. Whether it has

enough political vigor to revive after liberation and to work for an authoritarian form of government as against a democratic one, or whether it might be used by anti-democratic industrial or financial groups, remains to be seen.

2. Action Francaise. Although the royalist movement of Charles Maurras and Leon Daudet may be a minor problem at the actual time of liberation, Action Francaise could prove a serious danger to postwar Europe both as an internal threat to a democratic France, and as a channel through which international reactionary or Fascist elements could operate. The party has remained strongly anti-Russian and anti-British; it has supported Pétain as a sort of interim substitute for the ing; and it has accepted German domination as preferable to Allied control. Several party members have held high positions in the Vichy government.

Action Francaise, limited to the south zone, has kept intact its various organizations, including feminine and youth auxiliaries. While refraining from active politics, it has kept itself in the public eye through lectures and meetings and through the continued publication of its virulent newspaper, L'Action Francaise, which is edited by Maurras and which claims 25,000 circulation. It has appealed primarily to middle class and student groups. Despite its diminished activities, however, Action Francaise may be expected to remain as a strong ideological threat to plans for a democratic Europe.

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